

***To Kill a Mockingbird* Summer Reading Annotations**

Annotation is **marking the text with insightful comments or questions**. Most proficient readers process this way automatically. However, as soon as they read the next page - if they have not annotated - their minds become fuzzy on the previous details, making analysis a hit or miss recall game. They might remember a scene, a character trait, or that detail might be lost.

Think of annotations as **“showing your work” while you read** just as you sometimes show your work in a math problem. You show what you think while you read and analyze—and thinking is a word-based activity, not just a nebulous puff of energy. If you can’t articulate your thoughts, then you have to question if you know what you’re thinking. *Thinking is how you connect to the text*. Of course, thinking requires ACTIVE participation with the text, engaging your mind while you read, *not* skimming the page. (Listening to your iPod, watching TV, or texting splits your focus so that you fail to connect to the literary text!)

Mark important sections of the novel to help you locate details quickly for discussions or essays.

Words and phrases that you need to mark as you read are the following:

1. Literary elements (symbolism, theme, foreshadowing, etc.)
2. Figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, etc.)
3. Plot elements (setting, mood, conflict, etc.)
4. Diction (effective or unusual word choice)
5. Images (striking words that appeal to the senses and that help to create meaning)
6. Character development (words from the author, other characters, thoughts of the character)

Highlight key words, phrases, sentences, and passages that are important to understanding the work.

Write questions or comments in the margins.

Put brackets around important ideas or passages.

Connect ideas with lines or arrows. Color code!

As you mark, you will notice patterns of repeated phrases, scenes, objects, and themes (motifs). The work of an analytical reader is to notice these patterns and variations. Notice that annotations are meant to be more than a “scavenger hunt” for literary techniques and rhetorical devices. Along with marking these elements, you should comment on the effectiveness or significance of the device. For example, detecting sibilance in a passage is excellent, but that recognition alone is useless unless you explain that sibilance in this case demonstrates the mental breakdown of the character. To recognize the *hubris* of a character is fine, but how does the character’s situation differ from previous similar moments in the novel? In other words, you are to search for patterns within the novel.

Guide for Specific Annotations: For each reading assignment, annotate the novel with the following ideas as well as *ideas of your own*. You must have at least one annotation per bullet point.

Part One

Reading #1: Chapters 1-2

- Allusions
- Point of view: shifts between formal and informal diction (adult/child narrator)
- Intro to Boo Radley

Reading #2: Chapters 3-5

- Character development: Jem, Scout
- Miss Caroline
- The Cunninghams
- The Ewells
- Miss Maudie

Reading #3: Chapters 6-8

- Motifs: Jem’s maturation, compassion
- Changing perception of Boo Radley
- Character development: Miss Maudie

Reading #4: Chapters 9-10

- Character development: Atticus
- Thematic motif: lessons children learn from adult behavior

Reading #5: Chapter 11

- Motif: bravery
- Reflecting on motifs/character development in part one

Part Two

Reading #6: Chapters 12-13

- Character development: Calpurnia and Aunt Alexandra
- Role of women: Scout learns what it is to be a lady
- Caste system in Maycomb
- Informal themes/motifs of prejudice: race, class, and gender

Reading #7: Chapters 14-15

- Character development: Jem's maturation contrasting with Scout and Dill
- Thematic motif: Adults learning from children

Reading #8: Chapters 16-17

- "The Roman Carnival" (159)
- The issue of "mixed children"
- Character development: Bob Ewell

Reading #9: Chapters 18-20

- Character development: Mayella Ewell
- Character development: Tom Robinson
- Conflict: Justice vs. Injustice

Reading #10: Chapters 21-23

- Awaiting the verdict: Tone
- Motif: Standing in another's shoes
- Thematic motif: prejudice in all forms (race, gender, class)
- Character development: Miss Maudie
- Character development: Jem

Reading #11: Chapters 24-27

- Scout's maturation in the context of Boo Radley
- Thematic motif: Hypocrisy
- Mockingbird motif
- Foreshadowing

Reading #12: Chapters 28-31

- Tone
- Mockingbird motif
- Thematic motif: loss of innocence/growing up
- Characterization: Atticus
- Point of view

Adapted from: <http://olympia.osd.wednet.edu/media/olympia/departments/english/gilman/tkamsyllabus.pdf>,
http://www.dentonisd.org/5121259299227/lib/5121259299227/How_to_Annotate_a_Book.pdf